

SEWARD ROAD TRIP

Before sending Rocki to Chile, we wanted to do a special trip, or family event. Out of the blue, she suggested going to Seward over 4th of July weekend. Now that is quite some drive from Fairbanks and I was not looking forward to it. However, after the fact, I would do it again.

We left Fairbanks at about 8PM Thursday night. I told Jan that I would drive all night. She was not keen on the idea, and suggested that when I got sleepy, to pull over and we would sleep in the car.

Our first break was at Denali National Park, about 2 hours south of Fairbanks. This is a usual break point for a bathroom break (heated rest rooms year-round). South of the park, we passed through Cantwell, where the road gradually starts its accent to the pass through the Alaska Range. This is, in our opinion, the prettiest drive in Alaska, flanked by snow capped mountains. It is impressive in any season. Driving through late at night with the sun in the northwest gave us truly awesome views of the mountains. No, Denali (known to outsiders as Mt. McKinley) was not "out".

Coming down out of the mountains, and into the forested areas was a let down from the last hour or so, and we settled into our drive to Anchorage, which we passed through about 2AM in twilight. I pulled into a Forest Service picnic area at about 5AM, about 30 miles from Seward. After an uncomfortable couple hours sleep, we woke up and drove into Seward for breakfast.

Much to our surprise, Seward was packed like sardines with people. Even more surprising was the bright sun, and temperatures that would eventually exceed 80 degrees!

Fourth of July in Seward is one big party, the highlight being the Mt. Marathon Race. Legend has it that the race began as a bet, one miner betting that he could run up the mountain and back in less than an hour. He lost. It took an hour and two minutes. Records indicate that the first official race was in 1915.

The race is about 3 miles - 1.5 miles up and 1.5 miles down. The descent is more of a controlled (and sometimes not so controlled) fall. Ambulances are standing by, and there is a first aid tent at the finish line. Blood is a common sight. The men's winning time this year was 47:32, while the women's best time was 56:46

A visit to the local museum allowed a chance meeting with a longtime contributor to this newsletter. Lee Poleske was manning the reception desk. We have known Lee via correspondence for many years, and it was a pleasure to finally meet him in person.



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EDITORIAL

As many of you will notice, *Mystery Tokens* is missing from this issue. We had planned to print the next installment of this series by Ron Benice, but our article on our Seward road trip just kind of got out of hand. Look for Ron's article in the next issue.

It has been slow on eBay this month, so there are not many prices realized, or items "For the Record." We presume that this is the summer doldrums, and that things will pick up in the fall.

The past few weeks in Fairbanks, it has been very rainy. If it were not for the flood control project, we would be under water. In the 29 years I have been in Fairbanks, this is the highest I have ever seen the Chena River. Fortunately, the Tanana can take the excess from the Chena via the spillway, and keep us on dry land.

CHANGE ISLANDS, NFLD.



This \$3 trade token somehow fell through the cracks. They are 32mm, and struck in bimetal (20mm cupro-nickel center with an aluminum bronze ring) nickel-silver, commercial bronze and gold plated commercial bronze. Illustrated above is the second striking (325 bimetallic), with a crab below the boat. The first striking (450 bimetallic) lacks this.

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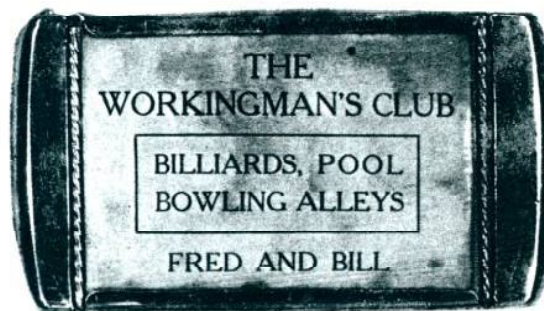
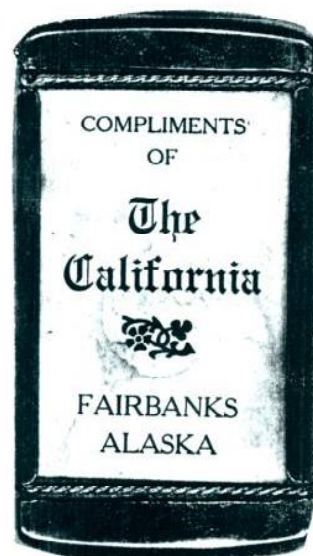
PRICES REALIZED

Selected prices realized from eBay:

Palmer , ARRC \$5 B-1g	122.50
Valdez , Northern, B-15a	51.51
Alaska Home Railway , B-C3a	99.00

OB = Opening Bid NB = No Bid
RNM = Reserve Not Met R = Reserve

MATCHSAFE



FAIRBANKS: The California, Fred (Martin) and Bill (Koon). Approximately 72mm high, 40mm wide. Silver colored metal and celluloid.

Also issued tokens. See B-11. A really neat "go-with" for the token collector. See ATC &PN Oct. 1989 for more "go-withs" for the California.

This has been in our file for so long, we don't know if we should credit it to Candy Waugaman, Richard Reisinger or George Simpanen!

SEWARD ROAD TRIP, CONT.

The museum was a treasure trove of local history, but my eye was caught by a 1966 Mt. Marathon medal. The description stated that it was gold and presented to the City Council. I asked Lee if he knew if it was in fact gold and what fineness. With a little work (the case had to be moved to allow access), and I was examining the medal with a magnifying glass. The medal was in a plastic display holder, and it was difficult to focus on the edge. With a little twisting and turning and taking it out into the sunlight, I could see that the edge was marked 14K. So there is another medal to add to our listing of Alaska medals struck in gold!

Walking around in downtown Seward, I checked out each bar for tokens. Only two that I stopped in were using them.



The Yukon Bar is using four different colored 38mm drink tokens that are nearly 4mm thick. All have black printing, and feature a dancehall girl on the obverse. Unfortunately, she looks more like the wicked witch of the west from the Wizard of Oz!. All state “good for one drink at the bar”, but all have different values as follows: Red \$3; Yellow \$3.75; Green \$4; and Blue \$5.



D.J.'s Wheelhouse is also using tokens. A black on white token is the same size as the Yukon Bar tokens. Black on blue and black on red tokens are 41mm in diameter and about 2mm thick. All three feature a ships wheel on the reverse. It should be noted that the “.” is omitted after the J on the red and blue tokens. As with

the Yukon Bar tokens, these also have differing values as follows: White \$3; Red \$3.50; Blue \$4.25.



We believe the Elks Club also uses tokens. They did not open until later in the afternoon, and we were already headed back north by that time.

Before leaving Seward, a visit to the Alaska SeaLife Center was in order. In the lobby is an automated cent elongating machine. This is a mandatory souvenir for a token collector.



After leaving Seward, we were passing through Moose Pass, and nature called. We stopped at Moose Pass Inn. While there, I picked up a soda, and asked in the bar if they used tokens.



It was at the Moose Pass Inn that I found the neatest drink token on the whole trip. Good for one Beer, it features a cool moose with shades! The bar in the Moose Pass Inn is known as the Hole in the Wall Saloon. The moose seems to be putting his head through a hole in the wall. I am sure there is some local significance as this is prime moose country, but I failed to notice the possibilities when we were there, and did not ask if maybe, once, a moose had made a hole in the wall!

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SEWARD ROAD TRIP, CONT.

Our trip then took us to Anchorage for the next two nights. While Jan and Rocki “shopped”, I visited Roy’s Coins in Spenard and Loose Change downtown. Unfortunately, they had decided on taking a long holiday weekend. Way to go guys! So, I walked around and visited some other non-coin shops, and the Saturday market that is in a parking lot on Third Ave.

Sunday morning, we left Anchorage after breakfast at Leroy’s (formerly Leroy’s Pancake Palace) for the drive home to Fairbanks.

When we have the time, a side trip into Talkeetna is a must. Talkeetna is one of the neatest little towns in Alaska. Granted, it is a tourist trap, but let’s take that in a good way. Talkeetna caters to the tourism industry in the summer. It is also a starting point for guided salmon fishing and home base for many flying services that take climbers to base camp on a glacier on the Mountain (ok, Mt. McKinley).

Numismatically, Talkeetna has a small history with only four token issuers. But two businesses are still operating. “H.W.N.” or Nagley’s store is still serving the community, as is the Fairview. I went into the Fairview to inquire if they were using tokens at the bar, and left with two different wooden drink tokens. Both have a simple drawing of the Fairview Inn. The top one appears to be the oldest. Both are black on wood.



The lady at the Fairview thought that maybe the VFW used drink tokens, but we were on our way before they opened for the day.

Our last stop was the commercial district that has sprung up around Denali National Park. When we came to Alaska in 1974, there was virtually nothing on the Parks Highway around the park. There was the park entrance, and maybe a gravel parking lot for RVs. Now, hotels and souvenir shops abound for about a mile or more north of the park entrance. I checked a couple of eating establishments with bars, could not find any other numismatic souvenirs.

MT. MARATHON MEDALS

We can offer the following Mt. Marathon medals:

1966 Silver \$20.00 1970 Bronze with loop \$6.00
1966 Bronze \$6.00

Please include \$3 per order for shipping and handling.

FREEBIES FROM THE FED!

During Golden Days this summer, the Alaska Public Lands Information Center was handing out a few interesting publications. Here is your chance to get something back for your tax dollars.

The Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park published the “Official map and guide.” Maps include the Chilkoot trail, Seattle in 1898, and Skagway today, showing the location of several token issuers. An SASE to the National Historical Park in Skagway might get you a free copy.

The BLM had three nice publications available: “Early Miners of the Fortymile”; “The search for gold along the Koyukuk River”; and “The Eagle-Valdez Trail, Northern Portion.” Also, a booklet that we mentioned years ago, “Eagle-Fort Egbert” was available. Drop a line to BLM, Steese/White Mountains District Office, 1150 University Ave., Fairbanks, AK 99709-3844 and request these.

I can’t tell you that they will send them. But, all you are risking is a stamp. You might also ask about other publications.

FOR THE RECORD



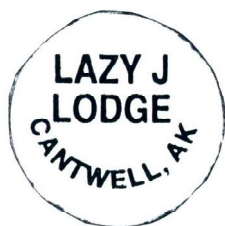
ANCHORAGE: Irish Setter Lounge, good for one drink. Silver on red plastic, 41mm. Now known as The Setter or Fantasies on 5th Ave. (a titty bar). eBay.



ANCHORAGE: George's Homestead Lounge, good for one drink, black on white plastic, 42mm. eBay.



ANCHORAGE: American Legion Spenard Post 28, good for one draft, black on white plastic, 32mm (submitted by Kurtis Hawk).



CANTWELL: Lazy J Lodge, uniface, purple on white plastic, 28mm (submitted by Kurtis Hawk).



FAIRBANKS: Alaska Goldpanners, 98th annual Midnight Sun Baseball Game, June 21, 2003. Brass, 34mm.



(VALDEZ): Re-elect John Devens, Mayor-City Council, blue on wood (submitted by David Phillips).



VALDEZ: Valdez Sightseeing Tours, One wooden nickel, blue on wood (submitted by David Phillips).

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

If you have access to the net, here are two websites that might be of interest:

<http://www.radomes.org/museum/index.html>

<http://www.radomes.org/>

These have information on aircraft warning sites, some of which were in Alaska, and some issued tokens. Perhaps by posting an inquiry or emailing the sight, you could discover other unknown tokens. Be sure to let us know if you find anything!